BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

THE INFLUENCE OF THOMAS HARDY'S PHILOSOPHICAL PRECONCEPTIONS ON HIS CHARACTER DELINEATION

by

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(A.B., Cornell College, 1930)

submitted in partial fulfilment of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

1932

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Chapter I.

Introduction and Technique of Character Delineation.

A. Introduction

1. Statement of problem and delimitation.

My problem is to attempt to show how Hardy's philosophy influenced his character delineation, and in doing this, I am concerned with his novels only. His philosophical poems and lyrics will have no place in this story, and of his novels, only six will be used.

2. Statement of work done on the problem by others.

Much has been written about Hardy, and about his philosophy. The bibliography will show that! Studies have been made of Hardy's characters and of his settings. My bibliography will show that, too. Many authors have shown that coincidence in Hardy's works is due to his belief in fate, and that the solutions to his plots and the resulting history of his characters are evolved from his deterministic theory; but I have been unable to find any author who has made a detailed study in an attempt to prove that Hardy's preconceptions influenced his technique in character delineation. That is my problem.

3. Description of data and methods used in investigation.

Data has been gathered from books written about Hardy, books on technique in writing fiction, magazine articles on Hardy, and technical studies on Hardy. All these will be found in my bibliography. I took notes which I thought related to my problem, selected the six novels to be

studied in detail, and formed my thesis from these notes and personal conclusions.

B. Technical Methods Used in Character Delineation.

Clayton Hamilton has given, in my opinion, the best discussion on technical methods in character delineation of any writer I have studied, and the following outline is taken directly from his book,"A Manual of the Art of Fiction", with the exception of the few footnotes marking thoughts of other writers.[1]

A character, to begin with, should be worth knowing. Most people are a bit particular about the persons to whom they are to be introduced--they trust a friend and an author to make the introduction worth-while. To be worthwhile, the characters must be great and all great characters are both typical of a class and individual within that class. An average character (actual man) is not of sufficient magnitude to contain all his class within himself or be representative of his class. The typical character, comprising or containing all members of his class, makes for truth, and his individuality within his class, makes him convincing--makes the illusion of reality. There should be no allegorical characters because they are not individual, and there should be no caricatures, if one is desiring a great character, because then the characters are not typical. Another author has the same thought in mind when he says that there should be fixed types who portray life just as it is--neither good nor bad--idealized nor caricatured.[2] It is easy enought to see that

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1. Clayton Hamilton: A Manual of the Art of Fiction, Chapter V
2. C. F. Horne: The Technique of the Novel Chapter I

Hardy's characters fulfill this requirement of being both typical and individual. I have found no author who maintains that Hardy's characters are not great, vigorous, and vivid even though he may not always approve of what Hardy has made them do; and many writers and scholars such as Ernest Brennecke, Jr., and Mr. Abercrombie have proved, to me at least, that they are great. Therefore, from now on, we shall assume this point in Hardy's characterization. It is too obvious a point to dally over, as one will see as we go on.

Then, there are static and kinetic characters. The first may be illustrated by Ben Jonson's humourous characters. They remain the same as the story progresses--they stand still. The kinetic character grows up or down, grows wiser or deteriorates as the story progresses--a developing character. Here again we shall admit that Hardy's characters are kinetic and not dally with that idea again. All scholars, in so far as I am able to determine, seem agreed on this point in Hardy's major works. Hardy's characters show the results of experience on their minds. That point from now on will be assumed, and dropped without argument. Another author expresses a related idea when he says "the highest fiction is that in which action is the result of mental and spiritual forces in play."[3] Hardy's characters have mental and spiritual conflicts from beginning to end--and the solution of the story is the outcome of these conflicts.

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3. C. F. Horne: The Technique of the Novel page 188

There are two ways of delineating these characters, however, and our concern from now on will be with these two methods of delineation. The first way is by direct delineation--the traits of a character are conveyed directly to the reader through some statement by the author through one of his characters or by bringing himself into the story. There are, approximately, four ways of using direct delineation.

1. By expository statements made by a character about another character who is to be presented--a detailed explanation of the character, such as Dr. Primrose's remarks about his wife before we meet her, in Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield."
2. By the author's description of the character when the character is first presented. The author, here, puts himself into the story. It may destroy illusion.
3. By gradual portrayal which is partly expository and partly descriptive.
4. By psychological analysis of the inner thoughts of the character. We must know the inner mind of the character to know him fully and intimately, and understand him--and we said, at first, that the object of characterization was to form a worth-while intimacy. We may be able to know a character well in two hours time in a novel, whereas, were we to meet the character in life, we might never know him. This analysis retards the story, however, so it should be used spar-

ingly, and it should not be used when referring to external objects within the story.

The second type of delineation is called indirect delineation. It is the more difficult of the two, but the better. The author obliterates himself as much as possible, and the reader makes his own inferences from the story, himself; the illusion of reality is thereby not destroyed. There are four methods of using indirect delineation, too.

1. By the speech of the characters--the language, et cetera, that the characters use.
2. By action: exhibiting the person in performing a characteristic action. This is absolutely narrative and not expository.
3. By effect on other characters: showing the response or reaction which one character brings out in other characters as shown by their actions and conversations. This is narrative and not expository, also.
4. By environment: we learn about a character through his habitual surroundings.

Both direct and indirect delineation are used by an author, as a rule. One is seldom used to the exclusion of the other, and we shall see that Hardy followed the pattern of other authors and used both methods--and used them well when his philosophical conceptions did not form an obstruction.

Chapter II.

Hardy's Philosophic Conceptions

The Idealistic Bases on Which His Characterizations are Founded.

1. Formative Influences on Hardy's conceptions:

A. Schopenhauer.

The starting point of Hardy's thought was, it seems clear, Schopenhauer's "The World as Will and Idea."

"Nothing really exists but the will to live" (according to Schopenhauer)---"now to will means to lack something, i. e. to suffer. But the will can never receive satisfaction in an irrational world, and there is none other. Hence to live is to suffer. We are at the mercy of a blind will to live, willing in a Universe which is governed by irrational chance and which can never satisfy."

Ernest Brennecke, Jr., has placed Hardy's "epic", "The Dynasts," along side of Schopenhauer's attributes of the Will, and the two scholars seem to agree in nearly every way. He maintains that Hardy and Schopenhauer both believe that man's greatest enemy is man. Here are the five attributes of the Will-which is the essence of the Universe, according to Schopenhauer--which Mr. Brennecke used for his comparison.

1. The Will is One and Immanent.
2. The Will is Autonomous.
3. The Will is Unconscious.

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1. George Rogers Swann: Philosophical Parallelisms in Six English Novelists. Chapter VII, page 110.
   Note: See also, Schopenhauer: Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung.

4. The Will is Aimless.

5. The Will is Indestructible.

If one studies the poem with these five attributes in mind, it is very easy to see the truth of Mr. Brenneck's argument. Since I am not concerned with Hardy as a poet, I shall not take the time to do that here, but the footnote will give one the source and the proof.[2]

Mr. Shafer has come to the same conclusion as Mr. Brennecke only he has a slightly different point of view toward the relationship. He says, referring to Hardy,

"It seems clear, however, that he did not turn to Schopenhauer quite as to a new evangelist, but rather as to one who, he found, had conveniently provided for him a seemingly adequate and appropriate vocabulary for the expression of some of his own conclusions."[3]------

"In the Preface to Late Lyrics and Ballads-----he regards himself as an exponent of evolutionary meliorism."[4]

It would seem, judging from inconsistencies in Hardy's own statements, that Mr. Shaper has come very close to the truth in his conception of the Hardy-Schopenhauer relationship.

B. <u>Von Hartmann</u>.

Hardy's idea of the growth of consciousness may have

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2. Ernest Brennecke, Jr: Thomas Hardy's Universe (in full).
3. Robert Shafer: Christianity and Naturalism--page 244--chapter n Hardy VII
4. ibid page 239-240

found its source in the philosophy of Von Hartmann, although it is not a proved fact. Mr. Swann said Von Hartmann believed that world progress could go on only by people accepting life and its pains. By this acceptance alone could take place the development of the higher consciousness, which is the aim of evolution.[5] He continues,

"Hardy and Von Hartmann we have thus seen agree on almost every point."

I(a) Both were influenced by Schopenhauer and the evolutionary movements.

(b) Both regard the world as essentially irrational, though rationally ordered.

(c) Both deny freedom and uphold determinism by the irrational will.

(d) Both regard the ordering of the events of circumstance as something over which human nature has little or no control.

II(a) Both ground human nature in the will and reason or experience. Both find the proper field of action in the will controlled by reason, not in the search for individual happiness, but in the life outside the self.

(b) Both conceive the nature of life as painful and therefore as evil located in the nature of the will

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5. George Rogers Swann: Philosophical Parallelisms in Six English Novelists. chapter VII, page 129.

(c.) Both regard good as located in the reason and regard moral good as the renunciation of individual aims.

(d.) Both regard the renunciation of the will to live as the desired end."[6]

Hardy, writing to the magazine,"Academy and Literature", criticizes Schopenhauer and the other philosophers.

"The original difficulty recognized by thinkers like Schopenhauer, Hartmann, Haeckel, etc. and by most of the persons called pessimists, remains unsurmounted. Pain has been and pain is; and no injustice can be atoned for by her future generosity, so long as we consider nature to be, or stand for, unlimited power. The exoneration of an omnipotent mother by her retrospective justice becomes an absurdity when we ask what made the foregone injustice necessary to her Omnipotence?

So you cannot save her good name except by assuming one of two things: that she is blind and not a judge of her actions, or that she is an automaton, and unable to control them."[7]

2. Ethical Structure.

Hardy's works are written about the central idea of outer misfortune ending in disaster through inner defect.

The outer maladjustment comes from the human being's reaction to environment, and the inner defect comes from heredity. Chance plays some part in Hardy's first novels, but in his later works, chance is reduced to a minimum and heredity and environment are given the most notice.[8]

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6. George Rogers Swann. Philosophical Parallelisms in Six English novelists. Chapter VII. page 130.
7. Florence Emily Hardy: The Later Years of Thomas Hardy.
8. George Rogers Swann: Philosophical Parallelisms in Six English Novelists. Chapter VII. page 113.

It is the double union of outer maladjustment and inner defect that makes the necessary condition for tragedy. "The moving force or ethical complication is the attempt to escape from outer circumstance. For the characters do not recognize the inner defect." The ethical complication, then, is an attempt, and the attempt is a kind of testing or struggle. And it is the inner defect--not brute chance that causes defeat.[9]

Mr. Robert Shafer finds these thoughts in Hardy's works as the pivoting point. "----although we are puppets of real or seeming chance, our feelings and desires are genuine and intense. This it is which gives intolerable poignancy to our situation. Our feelings and desires are genuine, yet life pays no heed to them or rather is bound to frustrate our desires and violate our feelings.---There is unescapable injustice in our having consciousness at all and, much more, intolerable injustice in our being indowed with the disease of feeling! No one can fathom any reason for our existence and no one can deny its combined suffering and futility.[10]---And the one blessing we can look forward to and possess is the oblivion of death."[11]

And again, phrasing his concention of Hardy's central idea in his works, Mr. Shafer says,

"He (Hardy) sought to show Nature's unconsciousness not of essential laws, but of those laws framed merely as social expedients by humanity, without a basis in the heart of things!"[12] And he names "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" as an example.

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9. ibid. page 117
10. Robert Shafer: Christianity and Naturalism Pages 250-253 Chapt.VII
11. ibid. page 266
12. Robert Shafer: Christianity and Naturalism. Page 261-Chapt. VII.

Hardy's own words may give us a hint as to the reason his novels have the tragic tone they have. "A New Year's Thought. A perception of the Failure of Things to be what they are meant to be, lends them in place of the intended interest a new and great interest of an unintended kind."[13]

3. Human Nature and Environment.

Mr. Swann believes Mr. Hardy would divide human nature into three classes, as follows:

a. The evil or near evil character--who is shallow, selfish, Epicurean (physically and spiritually), and is an egoist and sensualist.

b. The common--place character who feels no conflict between the self and circumstance because he is adjusted to his environment. Examples of this type are found in Hardy's rural characters who are unimportant and exempt from Fate. They are placid!

c. The fine character who has "achieved the state of resignation and self-sacrifice, which in some respects is the highest moral goal." He has, in a sense, achieved perfection, or is well on the road to it.

The first type cannot learn from either experience or sorrow--he is forever the same, while outer life is still intact. He lives wholly in the outer sphere, and learns always too late, if he learns at all.

The second type lives wholly in the outer sphere, too, and learns only slightly.

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13. Florence Emily Hardy: Early Life of Thomas Hardy. page 133.

The third type takes refuge within himself from the grip of fate and thus is saved.

The peculiarity of human nature, then, is that it is not active but contemplative. The business of human nature is to learn by experience, for without helpful experience one is a mere collection of emotions. This experience is not achieved by action but by being acted on. It is the inner response to external action. And when inner life is developed, outer life decreases. "The inner and the outer tend to become exclusive. Thus there arises a dualism between the two worlds." The dual worlds are really environment and human nature. Environment or activity must be interpreted in terms of "biological and psychological behavior." "Human nature and its contemplation must be interpreted in terms of experience, knowledge, feeling and wisdom, the desire, the wish, the aspiration."[14] Human Nature also is to be regarded as two-fold; the will to live dominating and controlling the actions (biological laws), and contemplative experience viewing the action of the will (psychological laws).[15]

Mr. Shafer, in speaking of Hardy's view of human nature, says that Hardy thinks "we are not all cast in one mould, nor set amidst indentical circumstances, and that our neighbor's life may markedly diverge from our own without being therefore damnable." [16]

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14. George Rogers Swann: Philosophical Parallelisms in Six English Novelists. Chapter VII. Page 120-127.
15. ibid. Page 127
16. Robert Shafer, Christianity and Naturalism. Chapt. VII. Page 239

He goes on to say, "Many of Mr. Hardy's pieces------are in appearance simply pictures of the injustice to which we are subject or of the malign elements in human nature itself."[17] It seems to me that this is just another way of saying that Mr. Hardy's characters have what Arislotle calls 'hamartia or hamartia, meaning some human frailty or weakness that causes defeat for the individual. And I believe that herein lies Hardy's claim to greatness. Hardy adds a philosophy to his observation of the hamartia in human nature, and we shall see that some scholars think that is Hardy's weakness. As Mr. Shafer sees it, the philosophy that Hardy tacks on to his "Hamartia" is that "we must conceive of our own distinctive traits, such as conscience or remorse, implying as they do responsibility on our part, as delusions. Not only are we really helpless, but all our necessitated actions are".[18]

We have Hardy's own words on his attitude toward certain human characteristics. On speaking of love, Hardy says, "Love lives on propinquity, but dies of contact."[19] And again he says, "intimacy makes a man's love lighter and a woman's no brighter."[20] His own unhappy first marriage may have had something to do with this view. On speaking of another trait or instinct, he says, "Courage has been idealized; why not Fear?--which is a higher consciousness and based on a deeper insight."[21] Hardy even had a Utopia which was a society

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17. ibid, page 241
18. ibid, page 248
19. Florence Emily Hardy: Early Life of Thomas Hardy page 288
20. V.H.Collins: Talks with Thomas Hardy of Max gate.
21. Florence Emily Hardy: Later Years of Thom. Hardy. Page 17

divided into groups of temperaments with a different code of observance for each group.[22]

4. Freedom of Choice and Necessity to Action.

The active or external side of life is strictly determined according to Hardy, says Dr. Swann. People have no choice or freedom in the external world and therefore there is no evil there that should concern human beings. Evil in inner life is in feeling, thought, or motive; pride and over-evaluation of self are the chief roots of sin. Evil in outer life is in anything which is harmful to biological laws--harmful to the preservation of the human race. The inner life has its moral laws to combat its evil, and the outer life has biological laws to combat its evil; but "the laws of nature work much more certainly than the moral laws." In outer or inner life, abnormality is an evil. (See Florence Hardy's two books on Hardy for interesting information on Hardy's keen interest in the abnormal and supernatural!) Happiness is not the intention of nature, but there is a purpose of developing individuals adapted to their environment. Nature has various ways of carrying out her purpose, including the way of chance. Chance, fate, and necessity work only in the biologically evil, or abnormal. The biologically evil or abnormal are naturally out of harmony with nature, and nature is hostile to them and strives to get rid of them as soon as possible. In a word, the question in the examination of any misfortune or disaster is not whether the individual was morally deserving, but whether such a person is biologically sound. There is complete determination of action, then--or outer life has no freedom of choice.

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22. ibid, page 23.

But there is inward freedom of thought and feeling.

"Man is thus under the joint control of will and reason. The higher the reason of the individual is developed, the greater the suffering of the individual." And perfect balance between these two is necessary for human being to stand the test of life in the best way possible.[23]

Mr. Shafer says that according to Hardy's point of view, "all of us alike are caught and twisted by circumstances which we vainly attempt to control, all of us are subject to the freaks and unconscious cruelties of chance, none of us is pure enough to cast the first stone, and this should teach us forebearance and sympathy. Many of the evils of life are inherent in the nature of things, but at least man's inhumanity to man is remediable, through the increase of charity, and here indeed lies the open path to human progress."[24] And he goes on to say, with Mr. Hardy in his mind, that "the true lover of mankind, seeking to increase the worth of life, is he who feelingly bares its wrongs and forces them into the common consciousness."[25] In studying "The Dynasts", Mr. Shafer continues showing Mr. Hardy's idea of determinism. "Amongst the Will's productions are, of course, ourselves, "flesh-hinged manikins wound up to click-clock off laws" designed without regard to our happiness or suffering, life or death. We are puppets whose self-consciousness gives us merely the illusion of responsible and intelligent action."[26]

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23. George Rogers Sznnn: Philosophical Parallelisms in Six English Novelists. Chap. VII. pages 134-138
24. Robert Shafer: Christianity and Naturalism. Chap. VII Page 238
25. ibid, page 240
26. Robert Shafer: Christianity and Naturalism. Chap. VII Page 245-3

Hardy's own words show his belief in the necessity to action through a deterministic theory. For example, his two definitions of tragedy definitely bear this out. In his middle-aged career he said, "a tragedy exhibits a state of things in the life of an individual which unavoidably causes some natural aim or desire of his to end in a catastrophe when carried out."[27] When older he said, "the best tragedy is that of the Worthy encompassed by the Inevitable."[28] And in his diary we find this cry against the Unknowable, "Experience untaches! The hypocrisy of things--nothing is as it appears"--- "The people are somnambulists-they can't see that the material is not real"---"London appears not to see itself. Each individual is conscious of himself, but nobody is conscious of themselves collectively, except perhaps some poor pauper who stares around with a half idiotic aspect."[29]

Mr. Dawson seems to have got Mr. Hardy's view of the external world when he says Hardy's settings make his characters because they are "brooding, shaping presences."[30]

5. <u>The Nature of the Good--or Conception of God</u>.

Thomas Hardy follows christian principles in shaping his own life, but he is decidedly un-christian in creed, because he does not accept the Trinity of the Christians, and he, apparently, cannot believe in the teachings of Jesus. Therefore his conception of God, or the Good, is bound in with his other conceptions.

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27. Florence Emily Hardy: Early Life of Thomas Hardy. page 250
28. Florence Emily Hardy; The Later Years of Thomas Hardy. Page 14
29. Florence Emily Hardy: The Early Life of Thomas Hardy. page 271
30. W. J. Dawson: Makers of English Fiction. pages 218-219

In speaking of the good and evil, we come close to our discussion of human nature, as you will see. But there is a shade of difference which becomes more pronounced as the discussion is enlarged.

Hardy remarked about "Nature's lack of sympathy with a state of grace." To him, biological good and moral good do not coincide. Biological good takes in all life in its normality or its development in full of its natural potentiality. Moral good is that balance of the mind of human nature, and the moral laws formed by that mind. Mr. Swann maintains that, according to Hardy, there are three types of biological good and they are quite like Hardy's three types of characters before one studies the two sets carefully. Then one observes that the biologically good covers only the second and third types of characters.

First, we have people "like the rustics---who live a life from day to day close to nature without reflective thought or purpose, and who do not strive to advance their situation." They are like all life-- plant and animal--bound up in their environment with stability.

Second, we have men and women "who have by nature a perfect balance between feeling and action---who are not troubled by passions ---who possess the ability to control the self in actions---and in feelings---and who lack ambition, but they feel like heroes."

"The third class are those endowed with the gifts of leadership, energy, and personality."

These are the three types of the biologically good.

"From the point of view of the inner life, moral goodness finds its highest expression in purity of desire and motive.---Next to this comes openness and liberality of mind, the willingness to receive new impressions and ideas which constitutes the essence of the capacity for inner self-development. Finally, comes sympathy and kindness

of heart for all persons and things, the placing of their interests above one's own."

Here there is, then, a two-fold standard of good--biological and moral good which conflict with one another except in one instance--with the people who possess physical strength for external life and inward purity for inner life there seems to be no conflict because they become passive in accepting what comes. "The final word must be inner freedom and the submission to external necessity." "Good is found in submission to the nature of the universe and the acceptance of its ends as one's own ends."

There is a three-fold standard of evil, however, because Hardy believes, first, that life itself is evil, second, that there is biological evil (in abnormality, et cetera), and third, that there is moral evil.31

But to get back to the nature of the good. Mr. Shafer calls Hardy's ultimate good, toward which evolution must tend, charity. And then says,

"If the only hope of human betterment lies in greater charity, and in changes which that implies, we must at once be forced not only to recognize, and to feel, existing evils as evils."-------but, he goes on, we must begin reconstruction.

31. George Rogers Swann: Philosophical Parallelisms in Six English Novelists. Chapter VII pages 1[illegible]5-1[illegible]6.

"It is foreshadowed in the opening scene (of "The Dynasts"), where the super-natural intelligences--'contrivances of the fancy merely'--as Mr. Hardy tells us--speak to one another concerning the universe and approaching events upon the earth. We are informed that the universe can only be conceived as something fashioned and controlled by a blind sense or will, working unconsciously, which no force can swerve from applying its clock-like laws---(he) pictures the universe as a self-sufficient mechanism, or as a single huge organism. Its phenomena are all controlled by an unknowable force immanent in them or, in other words, an integral part of the whole. "32 If this is true, it is time, certainly, that we did concentrate on charity.

Hardy's belief in an abstract power or determinism may be found in this statement contained in his diary. He was thinking of the writers of history of his day, calling their methods charlatanism--"Is not history the outcome of passivity, acted upon by unconscious propensity?"33

And again, in speaking of getting at the truth of the universe, Hardy said, "We don't always remember as

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32. Robert Shafer: Christianity and Naturalism. Chap. VII. pages 240-248

33. Florene Emily Hardy: Early Life of Thomas Hardy. Page 220

we should that in getting at truth, we get only at the true nature of the impression that an object, etc., produces on us, the true thing in itself being still, as Kant shows, beyond our knowledge."34 If this is also true, then Hardy must not lay down his laws of the universe as truth, either, once he is human and subject to the error of impression.

Mr. Brennecke believes that Hardy thinks miracles are superstitions, ritual is foolish, that man does what he does, not because he responds to stimulus in a certain way--he is willed to do things--he will or must want to do what he does but, no matter how near the above comes to Schopenhauer, Mr. Brennecke believes Hardy went beyond Schopenhauer in that he had hope for a growth of the consciousness of Will, and that Hardy had a melioristic belief in a gradual improvement in life through the idealistic efforts of enlightened men.35 And this takes us back, in thought, to Mr. Shafer's term, charity, again.

As I have said before, Hardy was not impressed with the christian creed. Mr. William Lyon Phelps says of Hardy, "If a church member had the same respect for Hardy's opinion as he had for his art, he would instantly be obliged to give up his church, religion, God, hope, and faith in this life or the next."36

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34. Florence Emily Hardy: The Later Years of Thomas Hardy page 9
35. Ernest Brennecke, Jr: Thomas Hardy's Universe. In full.
36. William Lyon Phelps: New York Times, February 4, 1928.

We have Hardy's own statements on the Bible and the Christian religion to add weight to Mr. Phelp's argument. He wrote in his diary, "The Bible is literature, like Sophocles' literature; the authors were discontented with actual life and made up stories."[37] And again, "Christians have outworn their theology like the Greeks and Jews," and he then suggests that a new philosophy must take its place.[38]

Hardy, in replying often to criticisms of his work, said he was misunderstood. It seems to me that there can be only two ways to interpret this. Either Hardy was using the term misunderstanding as an alibi to dodge criticism (and we know Hardy was bitter against criticism--he could not stand it!), or else Hardy could not express his philosophy well. And poor expression, according to educators, means muddy thinking. I do think Hardy was confused in his philosophy, and thought he believed in things he actually did not believe in. The second Mrs. Hardy shows us, however, what Hardy did not believe in.

"In answer to those who said Hardy believed in an 'all-powerful being endowed with the baser human passions, who turns everything into evil and rejoices in the mischief he has wrought,' and those who said, 'To him, evil is not so much a mystery, a problem, as the wilful malice of his god,' Hardy replied, 'I do not hold the ludicrous opinions--------of the primitive believer in his man-shaped tribal god--------no more than that the wind is

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37. Florence Emily Hardy: Early Life of Thomas Hardy. page 223
38. Florence Emily Hardy: The Later Years of Thomas Hardy. page 73

a powerful being endowed with the baser human passions."[39]

And in a letter to Edward Wright, June 2, 1907, Hardy said, in telling what he did believe in, "I have used in my verse, and to some extent in my prose, a philosophy which I have denoted as being a generalized form of what the thinking world has generally come to adopt.----That the Unconscious Will of the Universe is growing aware of Itself. I believe I may claim as my own idea solely--at which I arrived by reflecting that what had already taken place in a fraction of the whole (that is, so much of the world as has become conscious) is likely to take place in the mass; and there being no will outside the mass--that is, the Universe--the whole Will becomes conscious thereby; and ultimately, it is to be hoped, sympathetic."[40] Here, then, is Hardy's religion or philosophy, whichever you choose to call it. He goes on to say in the letter, "This theory, too, seems to me to settle the question of free-will vs. necessity. The will of man is, according to it, neither wholly free nor wholly infree. When swayed by the Universal Will (which he mostly must be as a subservient part of it) he is not individually free; but whenever it happens that all the rest of the Great Will is in equilibrium, the minute portion called one person's will is free, just as the performer's fingers are free to go on playing the pianoforte of themselves when he talks or thinks of something else and the head does not rule them."[41]

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39. Florence Emily Hardy: The Later Years of Thomas Hardy. page 4.
40. Florence Emily Hardy: ibid page 114-115
41. Florence Emily Hardy: The later Years of Thomas Hardy. page 115

In his diary, too, he has said that he believed in the good Omnipotent--but that it was hampered--that it was striving for our good, but only able to achieve it, occasionally. In 1890, Hardy wrote Alfred Noyes that he had no belief in a malign Power. "The Cause of Things is neither moral nor immoral, but unmoral!"[42]

6. Hardy's Inconsistencies in His Philosophy.

Hardy is inconsistent in his own statements.

a. "Let every man make a philosophy for himself out of his own experience."[43] Then in a letter to Mr. Helen Garwood he says, "My philosophy is a development from Schopenhauer through later philosophers."[44] Then in another situation he says he has no philosophy, merely "impressions of the moment."

b. He says the human will is "neither wholly free nor wholly unfree"; and then he says, "Nature is blind and not a judge of her actions, or she is an automaton and unable to control them." Human will cannot be free, then, according to this last statement.

C. Then Hardy is bitter at being called a pessimist and says the unconscious will is growing aware of itself. But in the next he will say, "If the law itself had consciousness, how the aspect of its creatures would terrify it, fill it with remorse." And, "This planet does not supply the materials for happiness to higher existences."

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42. Patrick Braybrooke: Thomas Hardy and His Philosophy--See also C. Ralph Taylor's Thesis, quoted in Bibliography.
43. Florence Emily Hardy: The Later Years of Thomas Hardy. page 91
44. Quoted in Robert Shafer: Christianity and Naturalism. Chap. VII

Again, "I have been looking for God fifty years, and I think that if he had existed I should have discovered him." And again, "Pessimism is playing the sure game You cannot lose, you may gain. It is the only view of life in which you can never be disappointed."45

7. Evaluation of Hardy by Able Scholars.

a. Mr. Robert Shafer.

Mr. Shafer says Hardy has warned his readers not to expect from him a systematic or consistent illustration of any one general view of the world. "On the contrary, he has insisted that his works constitute a series of fugitive impressions set down as they have come, with no attempt at coordination----it is a fact that Mr. Hardy has been singularly faithful, sincere, and courageous in the attempt to follow experience whithersoever it might lead him, and this in itself merits, as it has increasingly received, high praise."---- But the inductive method is not all there is to a conclusive process--"an artist's greatness depends in the end, and always must depend, upon the quality of his experience as well as upon his honesty and skill in dealing with it. And this matter of quality is in Mr. Hardy's case rendered doubtful by the fact that his effort to follow impressions wherever they might lead has submerged him in a fundamental contradiction, strange in its character though familiar enough in the present age----he was no more able than were others to resist the seeming attractions of the mechanical philosophy. Consequently his observation of the very aspects of existence which roused his humanitarian fervour and caused him to make deeply moving pleas for charity, helped to convince him that human beings were capable of no responsible acts whatever.

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45. Taken from Florence Emily Hardy's two books on Hardy. See also C. Ralph Taylor's Thesis, quoted in bibliography.

The two things, of course, completely cancel each other, since unless we have some real freedom it is useless to talk to us about charitable acts or any other responsible deeds----it is not easy to see how a man can attribute any value to his own thought who regards human beings as mere running machines, regulated by a non-human force which renders all their ideas illusory."[46] Hardy speaks of truth as subject to the error of impression and illusion and then, according to Lionel Johnson, Hardy is dogmatic in his novels since they "are not written for a purpose, to prove a truth; but with a prejudice, that it is a proved truth." (Quoted inexactly by Mr. Swann, in his book).[47]

Mr. Shafer goes on to say that "Mr. Hardy did not know what he did believe--he said often what he did not mean to say." In summing up Hardy's greatness, however, Mr. Shafer says Mr. Hardy has made us aware that it is only he who has done nothing that escapes illusion--that our lives are really mean and little in comparison with the vast tragedy of the whole, and he has also made the lives of humble people have tragic significance. However, his tragedy centered in humble life is more a cosmic tragedy than a human tragedy--and the value of cosmic tragedy is still to be determined; it is a debatable question whether there can be cosmic tragedy--most christians would say there could not be one.[48]

B. Mr. Thomas Seley.

Mr. Seley agrees with Mr. Shafer that it is unwise to jot down all one's impressions. In Hardy's preface to "Tess", he asserts that

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46. Robert Shafer: Christianity and Naturalism. Chap. VII pgs. 248-281
47. Lionel Johnson: The Art of Thomas Hardy. pg. 173 (from George D. Swann.)
48. Robert Shafer: Christianity and Naturalism. Chap. VII

~~he asserts that~~ he intended to be representative, merely, in the scenic parts, and in the contemplative parts to give "impressions oftener than convictions. Kelly maintains that impression is half-formed and insufficiently accentuated conviction." A reader cannot distinguish very well between the two, if at all. Then Mr. Daley goes on to say,

"One of Hardy's impressions is that actions which come from the noblest promptings and best motives have unhappy results. No matter whether you are good or bad, the outcome will be the same. Tess is a striking example----Hardy's character drawing is not true to experience. A man who has fits of intoxication and sensuality cannot continue to act from high motives to the end. A woman who has been weak once cannot be weak a second time without deterioration. Men and women cannot consistently act from high principles for a lifetime when those principles are mocked again and again by the irony of events. The law of probabilities is against this ever-lasting run of bad luck for innocence, virtue, and heroism. Holy instincts are sometimes right and sometimes wrong but not always wrong as Hardy makes them----It is as wrong to exaggerate badness or evil, in art, as it is to exaggerate goodness.--------

"To emphasize the wrongfulness of the destiny meted out to mankind, Hardy takes pains to show that those fated to be crushed, trampled down, and put under ears and hoofs, are much tenderer in heart than the systems of nature, the schemes of civilization, and social politics by which they are immolated.

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The merciful obtain something very different from mercy." Then he says, "that characters of other authors are under a philosophy exactly opposite of Hardy's philosophy, and they have more verisimilitude."[49]

C. Lionel Johnson.

Mr. Johnson also finds some qualities of greatness in Hardy's works. The following statement is decidedly a new point of view in the consideration of Hardy.

"The Humanists, in any liberal sense of that term, are the catholics of art: well-balanced and well-proportioned is mind, they exaggerate nothing; but upon the facts of life, spiritual and material, they look with a discernment which gives to realize them all at their true value. The worthiest, the most valuable facts of life are the human sentiments and the human passions in which common life agrees, yet touches, to all imaginable variation of issue, each single soul. Mr. Hardy is often of these Humanists--he may be of the Classics."[50]

D. Lionel Trilling Berle, Mr. Croce, and Mr. Shafer.

Opposing this humanistic point of view are the scholars who name Hardy a naturalist. Miss Berle says Hardy is a naturalist--not a humanistic realist. She says he takes no attempt to reproduce the life of the Wessex town in anything like its complexness and probable dullness. Of the six or seven most important novels, she says "Far From the Madding Crowd" is the only one in which the sexual passions play a more than a marginal part in the development of character. Hardy uses uncommon and abnormal characters, only.

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49. Thomas Selby: The Theology of Modern Fiction-Chap.III page 110
50. Lionel B. Johnson: The Art of Thomas Hardy. Page 18

"He not only places abnormal people in normal situations but adds to the sordidness and squalor by asserting there is no possibility of escape from environment and heredity."----

"The ideal life which Hardy develops is one which allows only degeneration to the individual." She says Hardy's characters never pass from a lower to a higher spirituality, and they go in the opposite direction at times, as we can easily see. "Self-control is an impossibility--, and indeed unnecessary, for when fate is all-powerful, control or intemperance are alike unable to avert the catastrophe or determine happiness. Thus there is nothing to be gained by striving, (and thus) Hardy's philosophy is one which glorifies the liberty of the individual in all matters of conduct and behavior." She also says that Hardy's characters, like Jude, are constructed on a physical basis--and it is, in her opinion, impossible to construct a character of depth and verisimilitude upon this basis. She also maintains that young love is not by any means the only type of love, and that perpetual adolescence is a pathological condition. With the exception of parental love, Hardy's love is in the lowest form. She maintains that Hardy is a radical coming to times as they are and that his philosophy is the basis of the laissez--faire spirit of reason.[51]

Mr. Grove calls Aristotle and Hardy naturalists--but Aristotle, a naturalist of the extreme type who lets style look out for itself, and Hardy, a naturalist who clothes disagreeable narrative in the most pleasing language.[52]

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51. Lina Wright Berle: George Eliot and Thomas Hardy, a Contrast. pages 29-45
52. Filbur L Grove: Development of the English Novel Chap. on Hardy. page 273

Mr. Shafer, in speaking of Hardy said, "The Naturalistic point of view has always had a strong attraction for men of secular, sensuous temperament."[53] We know that Hardy was a Shelleysque type of boy in some respects. He felt a sort of kinship toward the sensuous and the spiritual. It is his sensuousness which saves him, in his boyhood, from being an outright mystic. He loved to sing, play the violin, and dance, but sometimes some music made him weep. One time, when very young, he was lying down with his straw hat over his eyes. The rays of the sun coming through the straw affected him strangely and he went in to his mother to ask her why one had to live and why he could not remain looking through the straw hat forever."[54]

As has been mentioned before, Hardy's pessimistic ideas toward love, and the sensual quality which Brennecke declares Hardy maintains is love, may be due to his great unhappiness in his early married life, but Henry Van Dyke and Rebecca West have quite convincingly refuted this rumor.[55] We know that he seemed to like marriage well enough to try it a second time.

E. Lascelles Abercrombie.

Of the scholars I have studied, I feel that Mr. Abercrombie has been, perhaps, the most fair and correct. He believes art must have a credible correspondence between perceived existence and conceived absoluteness of reality, and of Hardy, he says,

"Hardy, in deliberately putting the art of his fiction under the control of a metaphysic, has thereby made the novel capable of the highest service to man's consciousness, but when he mixes the

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53. Robert Shafer: Christianity and Naturalism: Chapter on Hardy
54. Florence Emily Hardy: Early Life of Thomas Hardy. Chap. I-V
55. See Van Dyke, Henry: The Man Behind the Book--Chapt. XI Also Rebecca West: Blessed are the Pure in Heart. Outlook, Jan.28/31.

metaphysic into attempted explanatory words, it becomes a philosophy, and that weakens its strength."[56]

In other words, it is not wise to spread one's philosophy in literature because there is too much dispute over philosophy. It is easy for a public to become agreed on a beautiful description or a fine characterization because that is something they can all perceive with their senses; but it is very difficult to get any agreement on abstractions--ideas differ as to the meaning of the Universe. It is the unknown and one should not be dogmatic about the unknown.

Again in ChapterII, of the same book, Mr. Abercrombie makes the following analysis:

"The obvious quality of Hardy's tragedy is that it does not begin in the persons who are most concerned in it; it is an invasion into human consciousness of the general tragedy of existence, which thereby puts itself forth in living symbols.-----Hardy's characters are not mere puppets jerked by a malicious fate, but Fate, instead of being an activity is a condition of Activity. The general measureless process of existence, wherein all activity is included, cares nothing, in working itself out, for the needs and desires of individual existence; the only relation between fate and individuals is that in the long run the individual must obey the general! Human desire (to Hardy, then) must therefore be at best an irony; when completely brought into artistic form it must appear a tragedy. Such a conception as this may be tolerably expressed only through a symbolism a completely efficient expression. There are times when it

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56. Lascelles Abercrombie: Thomas Hardy. A critical Study. p. 20

is unfortunately pessimistic--this control of the metaphysic--but the struggle of the character against it is always great and thus the character is great.-------You cannot blame a character (and call him weak) for something that is not his fault."[57]

Mr. Abercrombie goes on to point out that Hardy's characters have human frailty, which Mr. Shafer mentioned, too. In summing up his points, he says,

"Without Hardy's gift for artistic form, this great quality of human resistance in his art would not have been enough to make a tragic matter of his conception of life and the world. But through his artistic form, a sense of perfect control is achieved bringing pleasure through the tragedy.-----Form is the result of a willing obedience, given by all the materials, to a presiding interest. And the result is a perfect separation from the surrounding disorder of the world.----Nothing occurs, in Hardy's stories, to seduce interest away from the whole."[58]

This leads us to the study of his novels, so that we may see for ourselves the truth of the above statements.

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57. Lascelles Abercrombie: Thomas Hardy-A Critical Study. Pages 21-35.
58. Lascelles Abercrombie: Thomas Hardy-A Critical Study. Pages 35,36.

Chapter III

The Study of Hardy's Most Noteworthy Novels of His Early, Middle, and Later Periods of Writing.

I His Early Period of Writing.

A. Far From the Madding Crowd.

This novel seems to be the most free from philosophical propaganda of any of Hardy's novels. The most predominating feeling which comes through the character delineation is the feeling of bewilderment. A good many references are made to "Fate," "Providence," and "Destiny"--but the Unknown seems to be more a wonder or a puzzle than a sure feeling of "what is to be is to be"--without any change. This feeling is brought out clearly for the first time when one of Oak's dogs, not understanding his duty fully, but meaning to do well, chased the sheep flock over a precipice, ruining the whole farm project for Oak. Oak shot him, not because he was angry with the dog but because the dog was worse than useless. And Hardy adds--"another instance of the untoward fate which so often attends dogs and other philosophers who follow out a train of reasoning to its logical conclusion and attempt perfectly consistent conduct in a world made up so largely of compromise."[1]

Again when Oak joined the common laborers in search of another position, we have this clear direct characterization mixed with a philosophical idea--the idea of Chance.

"At one end of the street stood from two to three hundred blithe and hearty labourers waiting upon Chance--all men of the

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1. Far From the Madding Crowd: T. Hardy-End of Chapter V

stamp to whom labor suggests nothing worse than a wrestle with gravitation, and pleasure nothing better than a renunciation of the same."2 And in the same chapter, again using direct delineation, Hardy describes Oak, after his misfortune, thus:-

"He had sunk from his elevation as pastoral king into the very slime-pits of Siddin; but there was left to him a dignified calm he had never before known, and that indifference to fate which, though it often makes a villain of a man is the basis of his sublimity when it does not. And thus the abasement had been exaltation, and the loss gain."3

Using indirect delineation, Hardy gives us a subtle bit of philosophy. Billy Smallbury, just one of the mass, was telling a story to the rest of the commoners. The story, the agreement of the rest of the folk, and this bit of a statement by Billy at the end of the tale make the minor characters or the mob--the chorus, in Greek drama--very clear and understandable to us. The statement (showing man's lack of choice)was:

"You see," said Billy Smallburg, "the man's will was to do right, sure enough, but his heart didn't chime in."4

Hardy's skill is tested again when, using indirect delineation, he portrays Bathsheba influenced by Chance or worked upon by Fate. Bathsheba was piqued because Farmer Boldwood had seemed indifferent to her charms. She has bought a Valentine with the intentions of giving it to a little lad, Teddy. Before addressing it, she and Liddy, her maid, have begun talking, discussing Boldwood and his outstanding indifference to her. Liddy gives her an idea

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3. Far From The Madding Crowd: Thomas Hardy: Chapter VI
2. ibid: Beginning of Chapter VI
4. ibid: Chapter VIII

or rather helps bring to the surface the idea which has been latent in Bathsheba's mind. Bathsheba, in a light, teasing mood and not thinking of any serious complications at all, takes part in the following dialogue:

Liddy: "Toss the hymn-book; there can't be no sinfulness in that, miss."

Bathsheba: "Very well. Open, Boldwood--shut, Teddy. No; it's more likely to fall open. Open, Teddy--shut, Boldwood."

The book went fluttering in the air and came down shut![5]

One finds an inconsistency in the characterization of Fanny unless one accepts Hardy's theory of Fate. Fanny was very accurate in her desperate following of Troy. She was so dependent on Troy and so necessarily anxious to please him exactly! Then on her wedding day--the wedding she desired more than anything else in the world--she went to the wrong church! Most girls in her situation would have haunted the church and been there a long time before the event was to take place.[6]

The insertion of the author's personality in the following direct delineation of Bathsheba gives one a decided shock. It irritated me, somehow. It seemed that Hardy was being patronizing--and no author is wise to give a reader that feeling. Here is the passage.

"We now see the element of folly distinctly mingling with the many varying particulars which made up the character of Bath-Everdene. It was almost foreign to her intrinsic nature." And all

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5. Far From the Madding Crowd: Thomas Hardy: Chapter XIII
6. ibid; Chapter XVI

Bathsheba was doing was being quite interested in the dashing and actually likable soldier, Troy!7

Then, Hardy, using indirect delineation, shows us a character rebelling against Fate which he names God.

Boldwood: "I had some faint belief in the mercy of God 'till I lost that woman. Yes, He prepared a gourd to shade me, and like the prophet I thanked Him and was glad. But the next day He prepared a worm to smite the gourd and wither it; and I feel it is better to die than to live!"8

Using direct delineation again, Hardy, through Bathsheba's thoughts, seems to give us what he considers to be the best attitude to take so that one may have contentment.

"Oak meditatively looked upon the horizon of circumstances without any special regard to his own standpoint in the midst. That was how she (Bathsheba) would wish to be."9

Then, the final havoc which Fate brings on a man who is trying to make recompense is given us through direct delineation--a description of Troy's thoughts when he finds the rain has washed away his flower planted on Fanny's grave.

"To turn about would have been hard enough under the greatest Providential encouragement; but to find that Providence , far helping him into a new course, or showing any wish that he might adopt one, actually jeered his first trembling and critical attempt in that kind, was more than nature could bear."10

We see that character delineation has been predominately

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7. Far From the Maddinh Crowd; Thomas Hardy; Chapter XXIX
8. ibid. End of Chapter XXXVIII
9. ibid.Chapter XLIII
10.ibid.Chapter XLVI

direct, in this novel, and while the general idea which one seems to get, philosophically, is fatalism, some other of Hardy's ideas as brought out in Chapter II are found here, also. The theory of chance, the idea of a third class of people, discussed under the topic of Human Nature and Environment, who have resigned themselves to their destinies, the theory of outer misfortune ending in disaster through inner defect, discussed under the topic of Ethical Structure, the theory that man has no freedom of choice, as discussed under the topic of Freedom of choice and Necessity to action, and the theory that heredity is the cause of many failures in life are all found to influence these particular delineations which I have put down. I do not say that Hardy labelled everything as I have done, but I do maintain that these ideas, later formulated by him were in a formative stage at this period in his writing, and I feel that they influenced his character portrayals very much.

B. The Return of the Native.

In this novel, the predominating idea seems to be that a more or less malignant force has charge over our destinies. It is a more radical theory of fatalism. However, as in the previous novel, we shall find other philosophic ideas influencing the character portrayals. The following bit of direct delineation is influenced by the idea that man is really just another atom in the Universe and has the same characteristics that other units of Nature have. The matron is Mrs. Yeobright, Clym's mother.

"Persons with any weight of character carry, like planets, their atmospheres along with them in their orbits; and the matron

who entered now upon the scene could, and usually did, bring her own tone into a company."[11]

Practically the same idea is lodged in Eustacia's mind when she is made to say, in this example of indirect delineation:

"Damon, a strange warring takes place in my mind occasionally. I think when I become calm after your woundings,'Do I embrace a cloud of common fog after all?'"[12]

Hardy's theory of the Unconscious Will is very clearly shown in the following descriptive direct delineation of Eustacia.

"Had it been possible for the earth and mankind to be entirely in her grasp for awhile, had she handled the distaff, the spindle, and the shears at her own free will, few in the world would have noticed the change of government. There would have been the same inequality of lot, the same heaping up of favours here, the same perpetual dilemmas, the same captious alternation of caresses and blows that we endure now."[13]

Hardy's idea of human beings struggling against the inevitable; and the rebellion against this struggle which results in unconventionality, according to man-made laws, is brought out in this direct delineation of Eustacia:

"She could show a most reproachful look at times, but it was directed less against human beings than against certain creatures of her mind, the chief of these being Destiny, through whose interference she dimly fancied it arose that love alighted only on gliding youth,"- (causing "desperate unconventionality")[14]

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11. The Return of the Native: Thomas Hardy-Bk. I-Chapter III.
12. ibid-Bk. I-End of Chapter VI.
13. The Return of the Native: Thomas Hardy-Bk. I-Chap. VII.
14. ibid

Indirect delineation showing Hardy's idea that all mankind is made to suffer in some way is brought out by Eustacia in a dialogue between Eustacia Vye and Damon Wildeve.

Wildeve: "You hate the heath as much as ever. That I know."

Eustacia: "I do," she murmured deeply," 'Tis my cross, my misery, and will be my death."[15]

Hardy's interesting idea of an outer and inner nature struggling against one another is used very well in this fine description of Clym Yeobright. It is direct delineation.

"He already showed that thought is a disease of the flesh, and indirectly bore evidence that ideal physical beauty is incompatible with emotional development and a full recognition of the coil of things."[16]

This same young man, Clym, who has thought a great deal, is made to show rebellion against the unsympathetic creator in this dialogue (indirect delineation). Eustacia had been pricked with a needle in church by a woman who believed her a witch. Clym came to see her and in the course of their conversation, he asked her to help him teach the school children. She replied that she had very little love for her fellow-men and Clym answered,

"There is no use in hating people--if you hate anything, you should hate what produced them."[17]

Next we find Hardy's own statement on love and marriage transferred to Eustacia's speech. (Indirect delineation).

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15. The Return of the Native--end of Chap. IX
16. ibid--Bk. II--beginning of Chap. VI
17. ibid--Bk.III. Chap. III

"Cynics say that (marriage) cures the anxiety by curing the love." Eustacia distrusted marriage.[18]

One of the most pitiful situations in the book is found in Clym Yeobright's marriage, when he is temporarily blinded and begins to cut furze to support himself and his rebellious wife. She criticizes him very much for doing it, but the patient young husband answers Eustacia in this way:

"But the more I see of life the more do I perceive that there is nothing particularly great in its greatest works, and therefore nothing particularly small in mine of furze-cutting."[19]

Hardy has certainly placed Clym in his third class of people; the finest class, which is resigned, patient, and kind.

These last illustrations show the bitterness which the characters feel toward cruel Fate--and the realization on the part of some of the characters of the futility of even bitterness against the Unknown. I believe Hardy's own ideas have made themselves known in these examples:

Wildeve tells Eustacia, "Fate has treated you cruelly," and again, "The fates have not been kind to you, Eustacia Yeobright."

She answers,

"I have nothing to thank them for."[20]

C. Ralph Taylor in his thesis on Hardy says the whole book shows the despotism of Will of Force--that the human will is powerless against the Will of Force or Fate. There is complete frustration. He says Diggory Venn is an expression of absolute

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18. The Return of the Native. Thomas Hardy. Bk. III Chap. IV.
19. ibid--Bk. IV. Chap. II
20. ibid--Bk. IV. Chap. III

futility. Other characters have strong wills but are crushed--and Eustacia with her rebellion is the most futile of all. Quoting her ideas from Hardy,

"She had cogent reasons for asking the Supreme Power by what right a being of such exquisite finish had been placed in circumstances calculated to make her charms a curse rather than a blessing."

Hardy says in the same mood, using direct delineation:

Eustacia "laid the fault upon the shoulders of some indistinct, colossal Prince of the World, who had framed her situation and ruled her lot."[21]

And again (indirect delineation)--

Eustacia: "How I have tried and tried to be a splendid woman, and how destiny has been against me! I do not deserve my lot----O, the cruelty of putting me into this ill-conceived world! I was capable of much, but I have been injured and blighted and crushed by things beyond my control! O, how hard it is of Heaven to devise such tortures for me, who have done no harm to Heaven at all![22]

And Clym, too:--

"If there is any justice in God let Him kill me now. He has nearly blinded me, but that is not enough. If he would only strike me with more pain I would believe in Him forever!"[23]

We find, in this novel, that Hardy has not inserted himself into the story quite as often as heretofore; he has learned to use

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21. The Return of the Native; Thomas Hardy. Bk. 4. Chapter VIII
22. ibid. Bk. 5. Chap. VII
23. ibid-Bk. 5. Chap. I

more indirect delineation, and we find that his philosophies are more acceptable that way. Every idea presented in these illustrations will find its place in Chapter II of this work, and we find the influence of Hardy's philosophies on his character portrayals becoming more striking and more effective on the reader. I believe this book is his most effective and artistic novel.

II. His Middle Period of Writing.

A. The Mayor of Casterbridge.

This novel differs from all other of Hardy's novels in that it is, in the main, a psychological study of one man. The first idea that comes to us through character delineation is Hardy's own belief about love and marriage--that love dies of contact. Hardy uses that idea in describing Henchard as we first see him and his wife.

"That the man and woman were husband and wife, and the parents of the girl in arms, there could be little doubt. No other than such relationship would have accounted for the atmosphere of stale familiarity which the trio carried along with them like a nimbus as they moved down the road."24 (Direct delineation).

Hardy's idea of human nature (just a higher order of life), in its relation to the Universe--and human nature's manufactured and artificial ways is clearly shown in his remarks about Henchard's sale of his wife in the furmity-woman's tent.

"The difference between the peacefulness of inferior nature and the wilful hostilities of mankind was very apparent at this

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24. The Mayor of Casterbridge: Thomas Hardy. Chap. I.

place. In contrast with the harshness of the act just ended within the tent was the sight of several horses crossing their necks and rubbing each other lovingly as they waited in patience to be harnessed for the homeward journey."[25] (Direct delineation).

We find that Hardy has the characters in this novel believe in Providence as in the former novels. Farfrae had been asked by Henchard to stay on with him in his work and name his own price. Farfrae answered,

"I never expected this--I did not!--It's Providence! Should anyone go against it? No; I'll not go to America; I'll stay and be your man!"[26] (Indirect delineation).

And this same belief is shown by Elizabeth Jane when, after her mother and she were taken back by Henchard, she find's herself wealthy but decides to refrain from buying too many clothes.

"I won't be too gay on any account," she would say to herself. "It would be tempting Providence to hurl mother and me down and afflict us again as He used to do."[27] (Indirect delineation).

The idea of a malignant force as the creator of the Universe is likewise brought out in the following thoughts of Henchard. Henchard has become jealous of Farfrae, Mrs. Henchard has died, and he has discovered that Elizabeth Jane is not his real daughter. The comparison at the end sounds much like Hardy's own idea.

"His usual habit was not to consider whether destiny were hard on him or not--the shape of his ideas in cases of affliction, being simply a moody, 'I am to suffer, I perceive'--But now through his passionate head there stormed this thought--that the

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25.The Mayor of Casterbridge: Thomas Hardy: Chapt. I
26.ibid: Chapt. IX
27.ibid: Chapt. XIV

blasting disclosure was what he deserved.-------Misery taught him nothing more than a defiant endurance of it.-----He looked out at the night as at a fiend. Henchard, like all his kind, was superstitious, and he could not help thinking that the concatenation of events this evening had produced was the scheme of some sinister intelligence bent on punishing him. Yet they had developed naturally. If he had not revealed his past history to Elizabeth he would not have searched the drawer for papers, and so on. The mockery was that he should have no sooner taught a girl to claim the shelter of his paternity than he discovered her to have no kinship with him. This ironical sequence of things angered him like an impish trick from a fellow-creature."[28](Direct delineation)

Hardy's idea of the malignant force,or as he prefers to call it, the Unsympathetic Will, is again brought in through Elizabeth Jane's thoughts. Henchard had forbidden her to see Farfrae.

"Continually it had happened that what she had desired had not been granted her, and that what had been granted her she had not desired.---She wondered what unwished-for thing Heaven might send her in place of him."(Direct delineation).[29]

Now, we find an example of Hardy allowing his idea of fate to carry him too far. Henchard, as Mayor, was to pass judgment on an old woman arrested for some disorder. Suddenly she accuses him of selling his wife in her tent about twenty years before.[30] Unless one can accept Hardy's theory of fate it is hard to accept this woman's memory as probable, particularly when Mrs. Henchard, a few years before, had asked her about that event and she could

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28.The Mayor of Casterbridge: Thomas Hardy: Chapt. XIX
29.ibid:Chapt. XXV
30.ibid:Chapt. XXVIII

scarcely remember it. How could she have remembered the man? In a later chapter, Henchard finds Farfrae to tell him that his wife is dying. Farfrae doesn't believe him! There is a suggestion of fate in this situation, as in the above example, but the main reason this lack of faith in Farfrae is accepted is that Henchard has given him just cause to disbelieve him. Henchard only a few hours before had tried to take Farfrae's life. Any person would have been suspicious under those circumstances. The distrust was due to Henchard's own weakness or human frailty.[31](Indirect delineation in both cases).

In another instance , Farfrae utters his placid belief in a Providence or Fate, which decides things without any interference from mankind. He and his wife were just planning to leave the city when Farfrae was offered the mayorship. Against his wife's wishes, he decides to stay. He said,

"See how it's ourselves that are ruled by the powers above us! We plan this, but we do that.-"[32]

Finally, we see Henchard still struggling against his recognized weakness. Hardy's idea of the importance of heredity, and his idea that man should not be blamed for his weakness for that reason, is clearly shown here, I believe. Henchard utters a pitiful cry when he is tempted to tell Farfrae that Elizabeth Jane is not his real daughter in order that their marriage maybe thwarted.

"Why should I still be subject to these visitations of the devil, when I try so hard to keep him away?"[33]

As usual, we see Hardy's ideas or preconceptions influencing

31.The Mayor of Casterbridge: Thomas Hardy: Chapt.XI
32.ibid:Chapt. XXXIV.
33.ibid:Chapt. XLII.

his characterizations, but this novel stands out not for its contemporary philosophical bent but because the character of Henchard can be well compared with the characters in the old Greek tragedies Henchard, like those old characters of universal appeal, failed not because of Hardy's idea of a Fate or Chance but because of the Aristotelian 'AMAPTIA or hamartia which means simply a human frailty. An average, good man is doomed or made to suffer because, like all mankind, he is not flawless, but is vulnerable to disaster through some small fault which probably could have been corrected. In Henchard's case, I believe it is pride with a correlating fault of jealousy. I think this novel is Hardy's greatest work if only for that reason.

B. The Woodlanders.

This novel is mainly a novel of setting and yet there are enough examples of character portrayals being influenced by Hardy's preconceptions to keep one from ignoring it.

We find one idea discussed in Chapter II presented to us, in this novel, for the first time. That is that physical and material comforts and discomforts have not a great deal to do with making a happy or unhappy state of mind. The inner struggle of the human being still takes place. Marty South, a poor young peasant girl, has seen rich Mrs. Chamont yawn. Here is her reaction to that yawn.

"So rich and so powerful, and yet to yawn!---Then things don't fay with she any more than with we!"[34] (Indirect delineation).

The young doctor blandly passes out philosophical morsels to his associates. He told old Grammer Oliver that "Everything is Nothing--There's only Me in the world and not Me in the whole

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34. The Woodlanders: Thomas Hardy: Chapt.V

world."----"And he told me,"(said Grammer Oliver)"that no man's hands could help what they did, any more than the hands of a clock."[35] (Indirect delineation). This sounds quite like Hardy, himself.

The idea of life itself being undesirable is shown in the indirect delineation of Marty South's character. Marty and Giles Winterborne were planting trees together.

"It seems to me," the girl continued, "as if they sigh because they are sorry to begin life in earnest--just as we be."[36]

The idea of a fate, as discussed previously, is brought out in the following six examples.

Giles Winterborne invited Grace Melbury and her parents to his party. He wanted to make a good impression for he loved Grace and wanted to marry her. His blundering servant, among other errors, had oiled the chairs and had failed to rub off all the oil. Grace's gown, of course, was stained. Grace was pityingly kind to him but Giles "felt that the Fates were against him."[37] (Direct delineation).

When Giles had his financial misfortunes, Grace really became fond of him. Marty had written a verse on Gile's wall about losing his wealth and Grace, too. Grace, knowing how much that would hurt Giles, changed the verse to tell him she would marry him. She thought he saw her make the change--why she thought that, we are not told--and in the meantime,not knowing how Grace felt, he had written a letter to Grace's father telling him that he was not a suitor for Grace's hand anymore, since he knew that was what Mr. Melbury desired him to do. Grace read Giles' letter. Again it

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35.The Woodlanders: Thomas Hardy: Chapt.VI
36.ibid:Chapt.VIII
37.ibid:Chapt.IX

seems to me that Hardy assumes too much for his character--who is in love; I doubt if she would have been so quiescent.

"She read it, and said no more. Could he have seen her write on the wall? She did not know. Fate it seemed, would have it this way, and there was nothing to do but acquiesce."[38] (Direct delineation).

She met Dr. Fitzpiers after this, and one day, going out to the woods to take some lunch to her father, she decided to stay in her buggy instead of getting out as usual. Her horse grew frightened and she was rescued by the young doctor. She smiled at him and said,

"There's destiny in it, you see. I was doomed to join in your picnic, although I did not intend to do so." Fitzpiers said,

"We must always meet in odd circumstances---and this is one of the oddest. I wonder if it means anything?"[39](Indirect delineation).

After Fitzpiers and Grace were married, Mrs. Chamont saw the doctor. She feigned an injury and sent for him. Fitzpiers, in this bit of indirect delineation, carries on the same tone as in the above examples. The doctor had, at one time, thought Grace was Mrs. Chamont.

"I have had a presentiment that this mysterious woman and I were to be better acquainted."[40]

Next, we hear a bitter cry from the unfortunate Mrs. Chamont, against Fate or the Creator.

"Oh! why were we given hungry hearts and wild desires if we

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38. The Woodlanders: Thomas Hardy: Chapt.XV
39.ibid: Chapt.XIX
40.ibid:Chapt.XXV

have to live in a world like this? Why should Death only lend what Life is compelled to borrow--rest? Answer that, Dr. Fitzpiers." (Direct delineation).[41]

And the last example of the fatalistic theory is a quiet one. Grace had nearly been injured in the man-trap intended for Fitzpiers. She was miraculously saved. She turned to her husband,

"Oh, Edgar, there has been an Eye watching over us tonight, and we should be thankful indeed."[42] (Indirect delineation).

The following three examples show Hardy's ideas about love--the last example going on into his evolutionary theory.

Giles had asked Fitzpiers if he were in love with Grace. Fitzpiers answered, "Human love is a subjective thing--the essence itself of man"--and then Fitzpiers went on to say that he was in love with the idea which was in his own mind.[43] (Indirect delineation)

When Fitzpiers was visiting Mrs.Chamont one day, he remark-that sorrow and sickness of heart were"the end of all love, according to Nature's law."[44] (Indirect delineation).

And the last example is Hardy's description of Fitzpiers' ability to love. "Therein it differed from the highest affection as the lower orders of the animal world differ from advanced organisms, partition causing, not death, but a multiplied existence."[45] (Direct delineation).

The influence of Hardy's preconception's on his Technique is not as strong here as in the former novels, but one can still find that the study in Chapter II can be applied to The Woodlanders in a number of instances, as I have tried to show.

41.The Woodlanders: Thomas Hardy:Chapt.XXVII
42.ibid:Chapt.XLVII
43.ibid:Chapt.XVI
44.ibid:Chapt.XXVII
45.ibid:Chapt.XXIX

III. His Later Period of Writing.

A. Tess of the D'Urbervilles.

In this book, Hardy's pessimism runs rampant. Schopenhauer seems to have prejudiced Hardy's mind until he could not be true to his own thoughts. He attacks Christianity with such cynicism that I do not wonder that the book caused such dissension; I only wonder that it did not cause more. Hardy admitted that the idea of fate was the basis of the book. He told Henry Van Dyke, "there was no other way to end the book. I did not kill her.(Referring to Tess). It was fated."[46] It seems, too, that Hardy, according to notes in his diary, attempted a parallelism between Tess and Clytaemnestia, and Tess and Iphegenia. Also Hardy says, "I allegorized the forces opposed to the heroine(Tess) as a personality--a method not unusual in imaginative prose and poetry."[47] There is really nothing left to do but study the characterizations and draw one's own conclusions.

The following illustrations of character delineation are all influenced by Hardy's preconceptions of fate.

Tess and her young brother, Abraham, were driving along the road at night.

Abe: "Did you say the stars were worlds, Tess?"

Tess: "Yes"

Abe: "All like ours?"

Tess: "I don't know, but I think so. They sometimes seem to be like the apples on our stubbard tree. Most of them splendid and sound--a few blighted."

46.C. Ralph Taylor: The Philosophy of Thomas Hardy--thesis.B.U.1931
See also Florence Hardy's two books.

47. Same thesis: See also Henry Van Dyke: The Man Behind the Book.

Abe: "Which do we live on--a splendid one or a blighted one?"

Tess: "A blighted one."

Then, when Prince, their horse, got killed about an later, Abe awoke to say through his tears,

"'Tis because we be on a blighyed star, and not a sound one, isn't it, Tess?"[48] (Indirect delineation).Again I wonder if Hardy is not carried away by his preconceptions too much.

The following example is a subtle hint of fatalism--of uncontrollable impending disaster. Tess had gone to the Stoke-D'Urberville house with misgivings. She was offered a position--"She fell to reflecting again, and in looking downards a thorn of the rose remaining in her breast accidentally pricked her chin. Like all cottagers of Blackmoor Vale, Tess was steeped in fancies and prefigurative superstitions; she thought this an ill omen--the first she had noticed that day." And then, Tess did not want to go tend the poultry farm--and the letter, offering her the position, arriving home before she did, made her suspicions stronger in some undefinable way.[49] (Direct delineation).

Then, Tess was seduced by Alec D'Urberville. The way her people took the disaster is portrayed by Hardy in the following way:-

"As Tess's own people down in those retreats are never tired of saying among each other in their fatalistic way; 'It was to be! There lay the pity of it!"[50] (Indirect delineation).

Tess left her neighborhood and found contentment for a while, but fate did not leave her alone. She met her future husband, Angel Clare, in this new community. This is one of their conversations.

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48. Tess of the D'Urbervilles: Thomas Hardy:Chapt.IV
49. ibid: Chapt.VI
50. ibid: Chapt.XI

Angel: "Would you like to take up any line of study--history for example?"

Tess: "Well, sometimes I feel I don't want to know anything more about it than I know already."

Angel: "Why not?"

Tess: "Because what's the use of learning that I am one of a long row only--finding out that there is set down in some old book somebody just like me, and to know that I shall only act her part; making me sad, that's all. The best is not to remember that your nature and your past doings have been just like thousands and thousands."

Angel: "What, really, then, you don't want to learn anything?"

Tess: "I shouldn't mind learning why--why the Sun shines on the just and on the unjust alike (she murmured, with a slight quaver in her voice), But that is what books will not tell me!"[51] (Indirect delineation).

Tess's last bitter cry against fate comes when, separated from her husband, she is about to go back to Alec again. She longed for death--the end of trouble. In the burying place of the D'Urbervilles, she bent over the door to the vaults and said, "Why am I on the wrong side of this door?"[52] (Indirect delineation).

This closes the references to fate. The following illustrations are Hardy's cynical preconceptions of christianity and their influence on character portrayals.

Tess had given birth to her illegitimate baby. She both loved and hated it. Hardy describes her thoughts as she ponders on her weakness.

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51. Tess of the D'Urbervilles: Thomas Hardy Chapt.XIX
52. ibid. Chapt. XXI

"A wet day was the expression of irremediable grief at her weakness in the mind of some vague ethical being whom she could not class definitely as the God of her childhood, and could not comprehend as any other.

"But this encompassment of her own characterization, based on shreds of convention, peopled by phantoms and voices antipathetic to her, was a sorry and mistaken creation of Tess's fancy--a cloud of moral hobgoblins by which she was terrified without reason. It was they that were out of harmony with the actual world, not she. Walking among the sleeping birds in the hedge, watching the skipping rabbits on a moonlit warren or standing under a pheasant--laden bough, she looked upon herself as a figure of Guilt intruding into the haunts of Innocence. But all the while she was making a distinction where there was no difference. Feeling herself in antagonism, she was quite in accord. She had been made to break an accepted social law, but no law known to the environment in which she fancied herself such an anomally."[53](Direct delineation).

To continue, Tess's unhappiness was caused by her fear of social criticism or man-made conventions. "Most of the misery had been generated by her conventional aspect, and not by her innate sensations-----Tess had(by now, however) drifted into a frame of mind which accepted passively the consideration that if she should have to burn for what she had done, burn she must and there was an end of it--but her baby had to be baptized"--he shouldn't be made to burn that she could not be passive about.[54] (Direct delineation).

When Tess was so happy with Angel Clare she said, "I don't

53.Tess of the D'Urbervilles:Thomas Hardy: Chapt.XIII
54. ibid: Chapt.XIV

feel quite easy--all this good fortune may be scourged out o' me afterwards by a lot of ill. That's how God mostly does--."[55](Direct delineation). Tess had still a horror of the wrathful stern God of her supposedly christian childhood.

Then comes Angel's bitter tirade against the God of the Christians and the world in general. He is leaving Tess because she has told him after their marriage of her first misfortune.

"Thus he watched her out of sight, and in the anguish of his heart quoted a line of a poet with a few improvements of his own.

"God's not in His Heaven: All's wrong with the world!"[56] (Indirect delineation).

Hardy's most scathing argument against the present Christian ways is brought out in Tess's interpretation of Alec's face after he has become a minister.

"The former curves of sensuousness were now modulated to lines of devotional passion. The lip-shapes that had meant seductiveness were now made to express divine supplication."---She feels the contours of the face"had been diverted from their hereditary connotations to signify impressions for which nature did not intend them. Strange that their very elevation was a misapplication,--that to raise seemed to falsify."[57](Direct delineation). And we find out that Tess was right because, later, Alec sees her again and says,

"Hang it, I'm not going to feel responsible for my deeds and passions anymore, if there's nobody to be responsible to--"[58] (Indirect delineation).

At the end, when Tess knows she will have to die as punishment

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55.Tess of the D'Urbervilles: Thomas Hardy: ChaptXXVII
56.ibid:Chapt.XXXVII
57.ibid:Chapt.XLV
58.ibid:Chapt.XLVII

for the murder, she turns to Angel to see if they can't both accept Christianity again.

"Tell me, Angel, do you think we shall meet again after we are dead? I want to know." He kissed her to avoid a reply at such a time.

"O Angel, I fear that means no!"[59](Indirect delineation).

I shall take time to bring out one more idea of Hardy's which influenced the characterization at the end of the story. Tess is portrayed as reaching that third class of human beings which Hardy made--the finest class--because she accepted quietly what came.

"What is it , Angel?" she said, starting up. "Have they come for me?"

"Yes, dearest," he said. "They have come."

"It is as it should be," she murmured. "Angel, I am almost glad--yes, glad. This happiness could not have lasted. It was too much. I have had enough; and now I shall not live for you to despise me!"

She stood up, shook herself, and went forward, neither of the men having moved.

"I am ready," she said, quietly.[60] (Indirect delineation).

This, of course, is not nearly all the examples I could find, but I think it is enough. It shows that Hardy's preconceptions are influencing his character delineations more and more and that his ideas have developed into more or less dogmatic philosophies of a decidedly sobering kind. His philosophy, in fact, is beginning to clog his artistry.

59.Tess of the D'Urbervilles: Thomas Hardy: Chapt.LVIII
60.ibid:Chapt.LVIII

B. Jude the Obscure.

This novel logically would follow Tess. Hardy goes as far as any human can possibly go in the theory of pessimism. The whole story, plot and character delineation, is built around the will not to live. This idea would be the natural outcome from the idea in Tess that no matter what one did, good or bad, one would suffer--fate was all-powerful and cruel. Naturally, one would not want to live in such a universe.

Utter hopelessness is found in the following character portrayal of the young Jude before he has grown to manhood. Jude was being paid to drive birds away from the grain, but he felt sorry for them--"They seemed like himself, to be living in a world which did not want them"---and he allowed them to eat. He was whipped by the farmer, and then "Jude leaped out of arm reach and walked along the trackway weeping--not from pain, though that was keen enough; not from the perception of the flaw in the terrestrial scheme, by which what was good for God's birds was bad for God's gardener: but with the awful sense that he had wholly disgraced himself before he had been a year in the parish, and hence might be a burden to his great-aunt for life."

Remarking on Jude's sympathy with nature and his hatred of seeing things hurt, Hardy says: "This weakness of character, as it may be called, suggested that he was the sort of man who was born to ache a good deal before the fall of the curtain upon his unnecessary life should signify that all was well with him again." (Both direct and indirect delineation).[61]

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61. Jude the Obscure: Thomas Hardy: Chapt.I

Jude, next, was tricked into a marriage. He talked with his aunt about it and discovered that none of his family had ever had happy marriages--some had committed suicide. Jude immediately went out to the ice--it was thin--jumped on it, but it held. "It was curious, he thought. What was he reserved for?"[62] And we find, later, that he was reserved only for more pain. Is the idea a cry against a malignant Creator? It would seem so.

Jude's wife left him, and Jude went to Christminster for education. He could not get into the colleges because he did not have enough funds. Rebellion against injustice, unfair privileges, and the Universe in general is shown in his act. He wrote on the wall of one of the colleges:

"I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you; yea, who knoweth not such things as these? Job XII.3" [63](Indirect delineation).

Discouraged, Jude runs wild for a time, and goes home to his aunt. While there, he talks with the visiting parson and learns that he may become a lowly curate if he will give up strong drink. Jude answers,

"I could avoid that easily enough, if I had any kind of hope to support me!"[64] (Indirect delineation). What a bitter, hopeless cry to come from a young man!

Hardy's own belief in hereditary weaknesses makes Jude and sue both afraid of marriage--this idea runs in the minds of these two characters all through the book.

Then we find Hardy's conception of human nature given out

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62. Jude the Obscure: Thomas Hardy: Chapt.XI
63.ibid: Chapt.VII. Part II
64. ibid: Chapt. VII.

through Jude's thoughts and actions. He lost control of himself, after Sue's marriage, and after a night spent with his first wife who had come back, married illegally to another man. These were his thoughts.

"The utmost he could hope for was that in a life of constant internal warfare between flesh and spirit, the former might not always be victorious." He felt he had"too many passions" for a clergyman and he was beginning to "ridicule the idea that God sent people on fool's errands."[65] (Direct delineation). Jude was learning by experience.

We also find Hardy's utopia in Sue's ideas. She is asking her husband to let her live with Jude:

"But I do ask it. Domestic laws should be made according to temperaments, which should be classified. If people are at all peculiar in character they have to suffer from the very rules that produce comfort in others!"[66] (Indirect delineation).

Then, Jude and Sue live as a married couple and have two children. They have taken Jude's first boy to live with them, too. Another child is about to enter the world, and we again find the idea of life being hard to live--better not to live!

Sue: "It is not that I am ashamed--not as you think! But it seems such a terribly tragic thing to bring beings into the world--so presumptuous--that I question my right to do it sometimes."[67] (Indirect delineation).

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65. Jude the Obscure: Thomas Hardy: Part II. Chapt. VII.
66. ibid: Part IV. Chapt. III
67. ibid: Part V. Chapt. VI

Phillotson, Sue's first husband, echoes the same mood when he says,

"yes,--Cruelty is the law pervading all nature and society; and we can't get out of it if we would!"[68] (Indirect delineation).

In Jude's sermon to the common people around him on the streets before the colleges, we find Hardy voices his own criticism of the Universe, and the sad fact that man is so powerless and helpless.

Jude: "A lesson on presumption is awaiting me today!--Humiliation Day for me!------

"It is a difficult question, my friends, for any young man--whether to follow uncritically the track he finds himself in, without considering his aptitude for it, or to consider what his aptness or bent may be, and reshape his course accordingly. I tried to do the latter and I failed. But I don't admit that my failure proved my view to be a wrong one, or that my success would have made it a right one; though that's how we appraise such attempts nowadays--I mean, not by their essential soundness, but by their accidental outcomes.-----I doubt if I have anything more for my present rule of life than following inclinations which do me and nobody else any harm, and actually give pleasure to those I love best----"[69] (Indirect delineation).

The culmination of horrid ideas is found when little Jude kills all the children and himself "because we are too monny". And speaking of the doctor's idea as to the cause, Jude says,

"He says it is the beginning of the coming universal wish

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68. Jude the Obscure: Thomas Hardy: Part V. Chapt. VIII
69. ibid: Part VI. Chapt. I

not to live."[70] (Indirect delineation).

The conversation continues, bringing out, in Sue's bitter cry, the idea of a malignant controlling force, or fate:

Sue: "There is something external to us which says, 'you sha'n't!' First it said, 'you sha'n't learn!' Then it said, 'you sha'n't labor!' Now it says, 'you sha'n't love!'"-----

Sue spoke of believing in satisfying nature's instincts and then she said, "And now Fate has given us this stab in the back for being such fools as to take Nature at her word!---- What ought to be done?"

Jude: "Nothing can be done. Things are as they are, and will be brought to their destined issue."

Sue: "But whoever or whatever our foe may be, I am carved into submission. I have no more fighting strength left, no more enterprise. I am beaten, beaten!"[71] (Indirect delineation).

Hardy thus shows us utter despair--a life without one hope.

When Sue and Jude go back to their first companions in marriage, Jude is convinced of the madness of it. He feels that it will not make any difference in their bad luck, and that they are retracing what right steps they did take and stepping back into the wrong ones. Jude stoically accepts the suffering they have been compelled to endure, but Sue feels recompense must be made; they must have sinned or they would not have suffered so, she thinks, and so she goes on to inflict more pain upon herself and Jude. Each goes back to the first mate, and Jude, when he sees Sue just before his death, speaks to her about this last bit of folly.

"I was gin-drunk, you were creed-drunk. Either form of intox-

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70. Jude the Obscure: Thomas Hardy: Part VI. Chapt. I
71. ibid: Part VI. Chapt. I

ication takes away the nobler vision."[72] (Indirect delineation).

I believe his "nobler vision" means standing for your principles in spite of suffering.

This novel, really his last, more than any of his other novels shows the influence which his ideas have on his technique in character drawing. It is the climax of all his bitter thoughts.

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72. Jude the Obscure: Thomas Hardy: Part VI.Chapt. VII

Chapter IV

Summary and Conclusion

Summary

I have attempted to show how Hardy's preconceptions influenced his character delineation.

First, we have seen that Hardy used both direct and indirect delineation in portraying his characters; and we have, also, seen that as he grew more experienced, he used the more difficult indirect method very artistically.

Secondly, we have seen these two forms of delineation used to express Hardy's philosophical ideas. The author probably did not intend to be a propagandist in all cases, although he admitted as much in speaking of his novel, "Tess of the D'Urbervilles." However, Mr. Hardy has been a propagandist in so far as one considers spreading one's philosophical ideas over pages and pages of splendid stories as propaganda. Thus we have seen:-

1. the formative influences of Schopenhauer, Von Hartmann, and others, in Hardy's character delineations.
2. the ethical structure of the plots being the same in each novel. (Each characterization--Grabriel Oak, Bathsheba, Troy, Boldwood, Eustacia, the Yeobrights, Diggory Venn, Henchard, Giles Winterborne, Marty South, Grace Melbury, Tess. Angel, Alec, Jude, and Sue--is built around the idea of the outer misfortune ending in disaster through inner defect.)
3. the three classes of human beings brought out in each novel:- (the evil or near evil who can not learn from experience; the common-place, who are able to learn only slightly; the fine character who has achieved the state of resignment and self-sacrifice---and Hardy's delineations give us

the idea that the characters mentioned above are in one of these three classes because heredity and environment have placed them there.)

4. that there is no choice of action or freedom of will for Hardy's characters. (Heredity, environment, and the Unknown, forestall any free-will or individual initiative.)

5. that the God of the Christians either does not exist, accord- to Hardy, since his characters are always fooled when believing in Him, or else He exists but is unconscious of the chaos of His Universe or unable to control it.

Thus, sorrow comes to all Hardy's characters in some way, and in the delineations, these characters think and act like small children who have been dreadfully hurt and do not know the cause for the pain.

Conclusion

We know that Hardy's ideas developed from a nucleus--that nucleus being the skepticism shown in "Far From the Madding Crowd." This skepticism--a disbelief in the God of the Christians of his period--grew into a stronger and more dogmatic form instead of developing by an evolutionary process of change. The usual case, in a man of good sound mind, is that he sees errors in his youthful ideas and changes his ideas as he grows older and gains experience. Hardy is the exception to this rule, for on studying his novels, we find that not only his ideas did not change but that his skepticism grew more skeptical, more bitterly pessimistic, until this negative idea developed into the idea that a malignant force is the Creator of the Universe. In "Tess," he commits the abused girl

to the"President of the Immortals" who has tired of playing with her. This suggestion of a malignant Force in control, in "Tess" (which he denied, saying he copied the last paragraph, with little change, from the Greek scholar, Aeschylus. However, his characterizations and statements in his diary belie his refutation), leads to his desire for oblivion, in "Jude." His philosophy has reached its limit, and Hardy, himself, seems weary with it.

If one goes on into Hardy's poems, one discovers that Hardy was not altogther an exception to the law of averages mentioned above. He began to have a hope in an evolutionary growth in the Force back of the Universe--he calls it a melioristic belief. To be sure, Hardy was late in arriving at this conclusion, but it did finally become accepted by him. Hardy could not stand criticism, and "Jude" brought such a cyclone around his head that we failed to get the novel we should have had--the novel showing his last development--his evolutionary development.

Hardy's artistry, however, is splendid. His delineations were biased, but this prejudice could not snuff out his genius. Lionel Johnson says his minor characters are a Greek chorus who stand around the two or three passionate souls in travail and make "grotesque, stolid, or pathetic commentaries."[1] Beardsley Brash says, "he does not know how to free his prisoners, but he enters the darkness of bondage with them and wears their chains."[2] Mr. Cross mentions Hardy and Aristotle in the same breath.[3] It seems to me that with one or two changes, Hardy's tragedies could very easily be changed into Greek dramas--and the Aristotelian

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1. Lionel Johnson: The Art of Thomas Hardy.
2. Beardsley Brash: Thomas Hardy: The London Quarterly Review
3. W.L.Cross: The Development of the English Novel--Page 29

principles, or elements, to be found in what Aristotle considers the best dramas, would be found in Hardy's dramas. I have particular reference to Aristotle's idea that a great tragic figure is a figure who is principally good but who is made to suffer through some human frailty--his "Achilles' heel"--which brings on disaster. The 'AMAPTIA or hamartia theory of Aristotle's does not destroy hope because one feels that he might have been able to avoid it, if he had wanted to control himself. The "Mayor of Casterbridge", as I pointed out, comes the nearest to this Greek idea, but all Hardy's novels, if they had not been prejudiced by a dogmatic philosophic idea, would have been comparable to the old classics. No writer, I believe, should force his opinions of the Universe, which is the unknown quantity, upon his readers, because then, as I have suggested, his work becomes propaganda more or less. Hardy, nevertheless, is a great figure in the novel and worth detailed study for artistic effects. His best work is found in his settings, as far as artistry is concerned. He builds his characters from his settings before engulfing them in his philosophical ideas. Many detailed studies have been made of his settings and their relation to his characters, and these studies are very valuable. Keeping this last fact in mind, I could almost agree with Hedgecocke who says, "Hardy has produced the greatest dramatic novels in the language."[4]

4.From the London Times: The English Novel and Thomas Hardy. (Living Age, VOL,270. page 650). Taken from C.Ralph Taylor's thesis, also.

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